

UGANDA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express our Nation's gratitude for the contribution made by the people and government of Uganda to the relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sam Kutesa was in Washington recently when he announced that his country was donating \$200,000 to the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. Expressing his government's sympathies toward the people affected by Hurricane Katrina, Minister Kutesa said: "We know that, under the guidance of the two former presidents, money collected by the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund will go where it is needed most and where it can be used best."

While a contribution of \$200,000 may seem small in comparison to the vastness of the hurricane's destruction, please keep in mind that Uganda is a small country that has also suffered its share of devastation.

Americans must remember the terror and oppression of the Idi Amin regime, which came to an end in 1979 but its effects are still being felt. The ruthless dictator Idi Amin deliberately destroyed Uganda's economy and infrastructure and displaced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes and businesses.

In 1986, after a long civil war, President Yoweri Museveni came into office with promises to stabilize the country, facilitate economic growth, and restore dignity and humanity to the political process. In the years since, he has largely lived up to those promises, although—like any country trying to emerge from decades of tyrannical government—Uganda still has problems that need to be addressed.

Uganda's contribution to the recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina should be seen in the context of the bonds of friendship between our two countries. Uganda is a key regional ally in the global war on terror, and through the efforts of President Museveni and his government, East Africa is a more stable place today than it was twenty years ago.

Indeed, Uganda has faced its own, home-grown terrorism, in the form of the brutal Lord's Resistance Army, which has raped and pillaged the northern part of Uganda and terrorized the population there. Led by religious zealot Joseph Kony, the Lord's Resistance Army kidnaps children and forces them to be soldiers in a pointless war against their own families and neighbors. There is a very good reason that the Lord's Resistance Army has consistently been listed as a major terrorist organization by the State Department's annual publication, *Patterns of Global Terrorism*.

Uganda also faces a terrorist insurgency by the smaller, but no less deadly, Allied Democratic Forces. The ADF, as it is known, extends its tentacles beyond Uganda: several of its members were captured in Afghanistan fighting for the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and they are now interned by the U.S. Government at Guantanamo Bay.

With all this in mind, our gratitude toward Uganda and its people, and particularly toward President Museveni, should be clear and strong.

Mr. Speaker, it recently became my pleasure to become the co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Uganda. I encourage all Members of this body to consider joining the caucus so that they can study more closely the U.S.-Ugandan bilateral relationship and learn more about how Uganda and the United States can work together on matters of mutual concern.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I ask that an article entitled "Uganda Is Latest African Donor of Relief to Hurricane Katrina," by Washington File staff writer Jim Fisher-Thompson, be entered into the RECORD. This article treats in more detail some of the issues I have just described.

[From the Washington File]

UGANDA IS LATEST AFRICAN DONOR OF RELIEF TO HURRICANE KATRINA—FOREIGN MINISTER KUTESA DESCRIBES \$200,000 DONATION

(By Jim Fisher-Thompson)

WASHINGTON.—Uganda has joined other African nations responding to devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina with a donation of \$200,000 for relief and rebuilding efforts in New Orleans and communities along the Gulf of Mexico coast.

Visiting Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa told the Washington File September 7 that the government of President Yoweri Museveni and the people of Uganda "feel with you and sympathize with you at this time of sorrow. We know you have lost dear ones, as well as considerable property. And we want Americans to know we are thinking of them and are standing shoulder to shoulder with them."

The official made a point of mentioning the donation was not just a pledge but that the money would be transferred immediately to the Bush-Clinton Katrina fund.

Hurricane Katrina struck the U.S. Gulf Coast August 29. The storm and subsequent flooding have devastated parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and left thousands homeless.

A statement released by the Ugandan Embassy September 8 announcing the donation quoted Museveni as saying, "The United States has been generous in responding to natural and humanitarian disasters all over the world, including in Africa. Uganda has more than once been the beneficiary of this generosity and justice requires us to aid the people in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama who have lost their homes and loved ones."

President Bush named his father, a former president, and former President Bill Clinton to head up fund-raising efforts for reconstruction that may cost more than \$150 billion. The hope is they can duplicate their very successful fund-raising efforts for victims of the devastating tsunami that struck South Asia in December 2004.

Kutesa said, "We know that under the guidance of the two former presidents money will go where it is needed most and where it can be used best."

Uganda joins other African nations contributing to Katrina relief including: Djibouti, \$50,000; Gabon, \$500,000; and Kenya, \$100,000.

Noting the symbolic value of the Uganda donation matched against the immense sums needed for reconstruction, Kutesa told the Washington File, "America has been very generous in helping Uganda fight HIV/AIDS and developing its economy. So it is only right that we try to help as much as we can. We wish we could do more but we are limited."

Kutesa said, "We know what human tragedy can mean. Unfortunately in Africa much of it has been man-made instead of natural.

The human tragedies of Idi Amin and Milton Obote, for example, led to the deaths of more than 800,000 Ugandans" in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Now, he said, Uganda is one of the best friends America has in Africa and "we look forward to strengthening our relations as we both cope with the aftermath of disasters that have struck our countries."

Kutesa's next stop in America is New York City, where he said he will participate in the annual United Nations General Assembly meeting the week of September 13-17. President Museveni plans to attend with a number of other African leaders.

A highlight of the U.N. gathering, Kutesa said, will be a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda in a tripartite peace process for eastern Congo begun two years ago with the help of the U.S. State Department. After Burundi recently joined, the Great Lakes peace effort is now called the "3 plus 1" talks.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize a milestone anniversary in the life of a school in our district. St. Francis de Sales Catholic High School is a college preparatory school operated by the Oblates of St. Francis which has been educating young men since 1955. On Sunday, September 18, 2005, the school, alumni, friends, and our community will celebrate the school's 50th anniversary.

St. Francis was the first college preparatory high school in Toledo and is well known for its academic excellence. Nearly all of its students go on to higher education. The school offers advanced placement courses so that more than half of graduating seniors complete their high school education with college course credit. As a result of this coursework, St. Francis has been named a College Board School.

In addition to academic excellence, the school fosters a spirit of involvement that encourages participation in extra-curricular activities. St. Francis boasts champion athletic teams as well as a wide array of clubs in addition to a fine music department. Religious instruction is required all four years and students can regularly be found volunteering their time and talents in service to our community.

Though the majority of students are Catholic, St. Francis' student body is comprised of students from all Christian faiths, Muslim and Jewish, Hindu, and all socio-economic backgrounds. This is a feature which makes the school uniquely different from others, and truly one of the school's strengths.

St. Francis de Sales, the gentleman saint, taught his flock "The person who possesses Christian meekness, is affectionate and tender toward everyone; he is disposed to forgive and excuse the frailties of others; the goodness of his heart appears in a sweet affability that influences his words and actions, and presents every object to his view in the most charitable and pleasing light; he never admits in his discourse any harsh expression, much less any term that is haughty or rude. An amiable serenity is always painted on his countenance. . . ."